

ENG 224/264, Issues of Race in the US South: A Cultural Journey

Mark Ledbetter, Office, HF 254

Wednesday, 10.00-12.00

Through an examination of works in social history, autobiography, fiction, poetry, and music, this course will explore issues of race in the U.S. South. Our course will not only address race relations as they unfold in the 20th and early 21st century, but also interrogate the idea of “race” as a social construct of privilege and power. We will examine the cultural representations of the relationship between whites and Blacks, and such issues as the racialization of social identities, ideas of domination and subordination, and the ways that gender, sexuality, and class are intimately related, if not intertwined with race and racism. While our focus is primarily on the U.S. South, this focus is not to suggest that a conversation about race is or can be limited to the southern United States, and therefore, at times, we will direct our conversation toward the larger “picture” of race relations throughout the U.S.

Texts you will need to purchase**

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*

Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*

Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*

Paul Beatty, *The Sellout*

**All other texts will be provided through handouts, online readings, and/or posted on Mitt UiB.

Class #1 (Week 3) 18 January	Class Introduction "What We Mean When We Say 'Race is a Social Construct,'" Ta-Nehisi Coates Essay found here: http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/05/what-we-mean-when-we-say-race-is-a-social-construct/275872/
Class # 2 (Wk 4) 25 January	<i>Playing in the Dark</i> , Toni Morrison
Class # 3 (Wk 5) 01 February	"In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens," Alice Walker, <i>Reading Kiosk</i> <i>The Color Purple</i> , Alice Walker

Class # 4 (Wk 6) 08 February	<i>The Color Purple</i> , Alice Walker, continued
Class # 5 (Wk 7) 15 February	"A Worn Path," Eudora Welty Photograph, Eudora Welty, PPT
Class # 6 (Wk 8) 22 February	"Poetry is Not a Luxury," Audre Lorde, <i>Reading Kiosk</i> Poems: "For My People," Margaret Walker "Beautiful Black Men," Nikki Giovanni "White Lies" and "Miscegenation," Natasha Trethewey **Poems can be found online
BREAK 1, 8 April	No Class
Class # 7 (Wk 11) 15 March	<i>Between the World and Me</i> , Ta-Nehisi Coates
Class # 8 (Wk 12) 22 March	<i>Between the World and Me</i> , Ta-Nehisi Coates, continued
Class # 9 (Wk13) 29 March	<i>Deep Blues: A Musical and Cultural History of the Mississippi</i> , Robert Palmer, Prologue and Chapter One, <i>Reading Kiosk</i> Music provided
Class #10 (Wk 14) 5 April	Folk Art, William H. Johnson and Mose Tolliver PPT
BREAK 12, 19 April	No class

Class #11 (Wk 17) 26 April	<i>The Sellout</i> , Paul Beatty
Class #12 (Wk 18) 3 May	<i>The Sellout</i> , Paul Beatty